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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 09/409,457 | 09/30/1999 | MARTIN C. FLAUTT | 24649A | 5361 |

30623 7590 09/08/2006

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EXAMINER

EGWIM, KELECHI CHIDI

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1713

DATE MAILED: 09/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/409,457

Applicant(s)

FLAUTT ET AL.

Examiner

Dr. Kelechi C. Egwim

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 August 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 50 and 52-69 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 50 and 52-69 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

¶ A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 08/09/2006 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 50 and 52-69 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kono et al., Gaa et al. or Cossement et al., for reasons cited in previous actions.

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3. Claims 50 and 52-69 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arroyo et al. or Geursen et al. in combination with Barch et al., for reasons cited in previous actions.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed 08/09/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

3. Regarding Kono et al., Gaa et al. or Cossement et al., as already stated in the last action, each reference teaches the superabsorbent polyacrylate polymer coating on a substrate. The fact that the prior art may not explicitly teach the method of forming the polyacrylate polymer coating from a polymer precursor in aqueous solution, does not negative the teach of the claimed product articles itself.

Still, the product is the same as, or an obvious variant of, the presently claimed product absent evidence that the particular process of making results in a materially different product. Even though product-by-process claims are limited and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of the product does not depend on it's method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process. See *In re Marosi*, 218 USPQ 289 (Fed. Cir. 1983) and *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964 (Fed. Cir. 1985). See also MPEP § 2113.

4. Also, it remains reasonable that the prior art coatings would poses the presently claimed properties since the compositions are essentially the same as the claimed composition and the USPTO does not have at its disposal the tools or facilities deemed necessary to make physical determinations of the sort. In any event, an otherwise old composition or article is not patentable regardless of any new or unexpected properties. In re Fitzgerald et al , 619 F.2d 67, 205 USPQ 594 (CCPA 1980). See MPEP § 2112 - § 2112.02.

Even if assuming that the prior art references do not meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 102, it would still have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to arrive at the same inventive composition because the disclosure of the inventive subject matter appears within the generic disclosure of the prior art.

None of the comparative examples referenced by applicant in the arguments are consistent with the embodiments/scope of the cited prior art references. Thus, they cannot demonstrate any inapplicability in these references.

5. Regarding the rejection of claims 50 and 52-69 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arroyo et al. or Geursen et al. in combination with Barch et al., again, the claims are to the product, not to the process of preparing the product. Patentability cannot solely be based on whether or not the prior art teach the method for forming the claimed product.

6. As already stated in previous actions in response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the compositions of Arroyo et al. or Geursen et al. with binder of Barch et al, each of Arroyo et al. (col. 3, line 1-15 and col. 4, lines 11-20) and Geursen et al. (col. 1, lines 7-10 and col. 3, lines 31-41) teach superabsorbent-coatings for fibrous substrate comprising a water-soluble polymer and other components such as lubricants and viscosity modifying polymers, and Barch et al. (See col. 6, lines 18-20) teach the incorporation of binders into coating compositions for fibrous **substrate for the purpose of facilitating the formation of a film on the substrate** upon the drying of the coating composition. There in lies the motivation.

4. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the application prior to the entry of the submission under 37 CFR 1.114 and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the application prior to entry under 37 CFR 1.114. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action after the filing of a request for continued examination and the submission under 37 CFR 1.114. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the

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shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dr. Kelechi C. Egwim whose telephone number is (571) 272-1099. The examiner can normally be reached on M-T (7:30-6:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on (571) 272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

KCE

KELECHI C. EGWIM PH.D.
PRIMARY EXAMINER

